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William Torrey Harris in...
Saint Louis Public Schools

[St. Louis, Mo.?]

[1910?]

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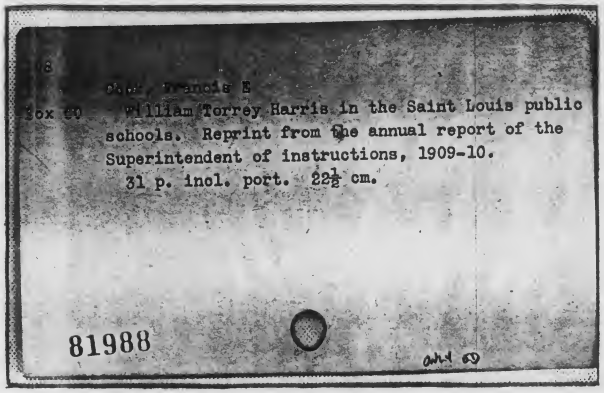
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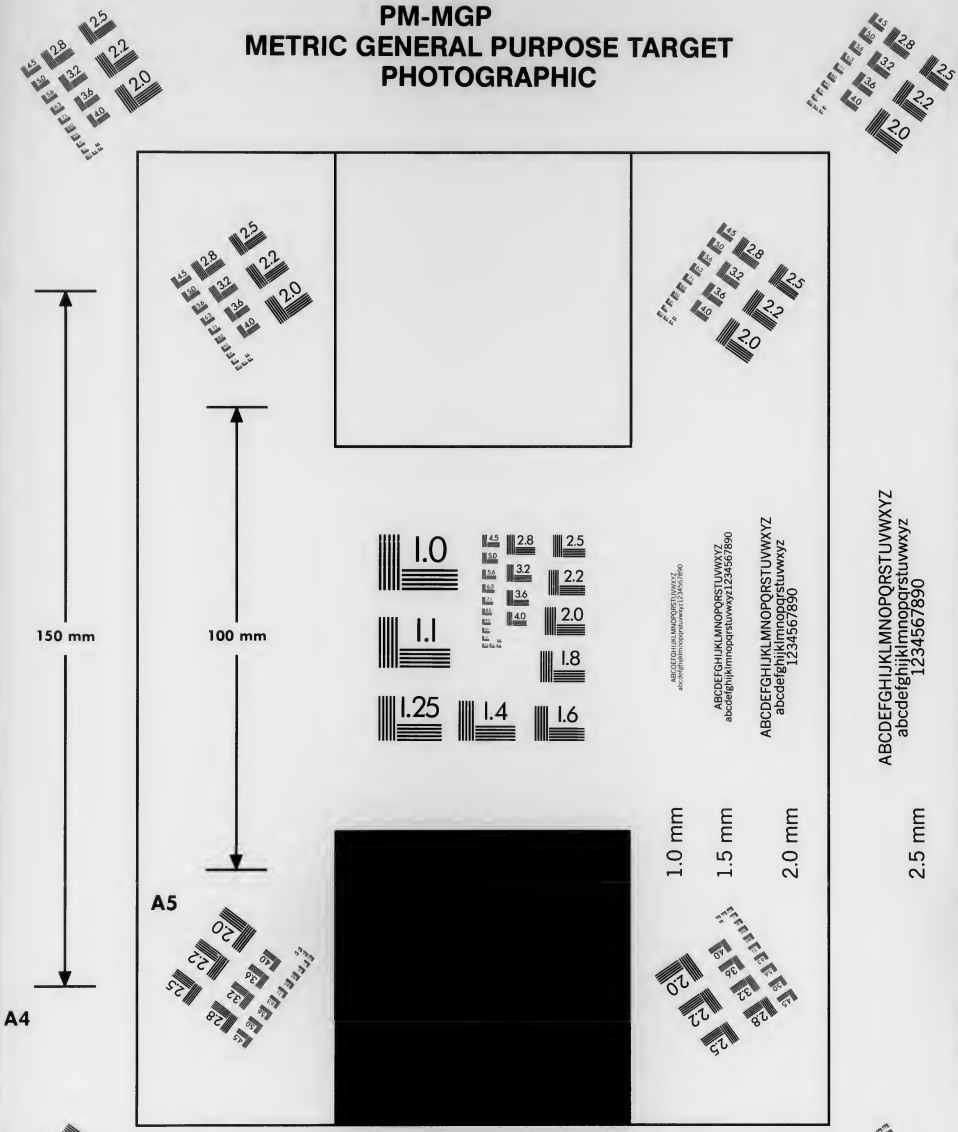

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William Torrey Harris

IN THE

Saint Louis Public Schools

BY

Francis E. Cook

Reprint from Annual Report of the Superintendent of Instructions—1909-10.

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IN MEMORIAM

William Torrey Harris

BORN,
North Killingly, Connecticut,
September 10, 1835.

CAME TO SAINT LOUIS, 1857.

WORK IN ST. LOUIS.

Assistant, Franklin School, 1857-58.
Principal, Clay School, 1858-1867.
Founded Kant Club, 1866.
Founded Journal of Speculative Philosophy, 1867.
Assistant Superintendent, 1867.
Superintendent of Public Schools, 1867-1880.

DIED,
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Jan 25 1917

Wm T. Harris

SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS, 1867-1880.

INTENTIONAL SECOND EXPOSURE

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No Superintendent probably has exerted a deeper or more enduring influence upon a system of schools than that which characterized the work of Dr. William Torrey Harris with the St. Louis Public Schools.

In memory and appreciation of this, the Board of Education, on his death, honored with his name the institution which trains the young teachers who are to instruct the city's children.

In further appreciation and for the convenience of those who do not have access to his epoch making reports as Superintendent, it is thought proper to epitomize at this time his discussions of school questions distributed through many volumes.

For many years Mr. Francis E. Cook was most intimately associated with Dr. Harris, in his office, as a principal of schools, and as a fellow member of the Kant Club. There was no one who could with better propriety be asked to make the epitome, nor one who could do it better or with clearer appreciation.

WILLIAM TORREY HARRIS AND THE ST. LOUIS PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

Sketch by Francis E. Cook, Principal Crow School.

In the year 1867 William Torrey Harris was appointed Assistant Superintendent of the St. Louis Public Schools, being thus transferred from the principalship of the Clay School which he had organized and with which he had labored for more than seven years. This event marked the beginning of that great public career which was destined to end only with his death in Providence, R. I., on November 5th, 1909, and the placing of his remains beside those of his forefathers, at Putnam Heights, Conn. The funeral services in Providence, simple, but profoundly impressive, were lovingly attended by a host of his fellow countrymen, and he left us sincerely lamented by the civilized world, who recognized in him "one of the few, the immortal names, that were not born to die." His living monument with us will be the **William Torrey Harris Teachers College**, which, with fine propriety, has been named for him, and which will keep his worthy memory green in the hearts and minds of our children's children, for whose well-being his best endeavors were ever so freely given.

The time now seems ripe for the resurrection of the essentials of those pedagogical ideas which, buried in school reports beneath the dust of more than a generation of time, really mark the chief origins of the progress of American Education for the past forty years.

COURSE OF STUDY.

His first assignment by his Superintendent, the late Ira Divoll, to consider the course of study, was destined to call forth his best powers and, in time, to enable him to stamp his most enduring impress upon the course of education in Europe as well as in America. He found the schools properly graded and suitably housed in their own buildings. He

found the course of study as rigid as cold iron, in the hands of self-sufficiency, loathe to change it. This he sent to the melting-pot, to reappear, transmuted by the fine alchemy of his intellectual genius, into pure gold. It was his work in this field which first won for him recognition abroad, he having received from the French Government the honor of Officier de l' Academie in 1878 and Officier de l' Instruction publique, in 1889, at the time when France had entered upon the reorganization of her school system. It culminated in his splendid report, as United States Commissioner of Education, on the correlation of studies, which Dr. Denton J. Snider, whose judgment is probably the best that could be upon a subject of this kind, pronounces "The masterpiece of its author, the greatest educational document that America has produced, and ranking very high in the world's literature of education. More profoundly than any pedagogical writer hitherto, this author grounds the elementary branches of the Common School upon their infinite value in unfolding the pupil, without neglecting their finite value in the utilities of human life."

Dr. Harris gives four arguments in support of a Course of Study and of graded schools, which are as applicable today as when first written. They are as follows:

1st. It perfects classification and allows full time for each recitation. 2nd. It prevents the premature entering upon branches of study. 3rd. It preserves grading in transfers from one school to another. 4th. It facilitates supervision by affording a basis of comparison.

To check and guide the centrifugal educational tendencies towards specialization which had then already threateningly set in, he undertook to harmonize the courses of study in the elementary, secondary and higher (College) education. He outlined the subjects of study and adjusted the elementary curriculum to them as follows:—A. Nature: 1. Inorganic—Arithmetic which quantifies; 2. Organic—Geography, which localizes (mastery over place). B. Man,

or Spirit: 3. Theoretical, or thinking power—Grammar, which gives mastery over mind; 4. Practical, or will power —History, mastery over time (human progress and process); 5, Aesthetic, or Art-power—Reading, mastery of the word (Literature).

To this comprehensive outline he added appropriate advanced studies, thus making a course for secondary and collegiate schools, his topics to be replaced, if desired, by those "of equal psychological rank." These studies were not to be elective. He deprecated the absence of provision for enabling the undergraduate to generalize the results of his study. To quote his exact words he says: "No wonder that so many students graduate unable to refute the shallow sophisms with which the air is filled by thinkers of the second stage of culture in thought, when they ought to have mastered the third stage of thinking in college or at least to have learned that there is such a stage and that all the great names in philosophy, from Aristotle down, have worked in it, and, more than all this, that on the third stage alone are found all positive justifications of institutions and all insight into their nature."

Dr. Harris, in his first report to Superintendent Divoll said, "After my appointment in March, 1867, I commenced at your suggestion as early as possible a general examination of the condition of the schools with respect to the mode and proficiency of teaching reading."

Reading. His first attack was upon rapid and indistinct articulation, and, in this connection, he quoted Voltaire, who is said to have remarked that, an Englishman would gain two hours a day in talking against a Frenchman "by swallowing half his words."

He corrected this defect and broke up "provincialisms", then much more prevalent than now, in our "composite population," by the introduction and use of Dr. Leigh's Phonetic Primer, which he had successfully experimented with in the Clay School. The use of this book, through his

urgency, now became general, and remained so until about 1885, five years after his departure from St. Louis, when the ordinary type with diacritical marks, was substituted therefor. His previous preparation for phonetics contributed to his success in this work, since he came to St. Louis a practical stenographer; indeed his first occupation was found in the opening of an evening school for the teaching of shorthand, the first of its kind west of New York, and where the late J. B. McCullagh, once managing Editor of the Globe-Democrat and inventor of the "Interview," was one of his pupils.

He next attacked the text-books in reading then in vogue, forcefully denouncing "easy" books, and those which sought to supplement school lessons by articles on scientific and historical subjects, and vigorously advocating readers which should be compendiums of English Literature, containing extracts from the great authors of our race as stimulus and inspiration, "cultivating the taste and satisfying the best aspirations." To show how deep-seated and abiding his convictions were in this respect, it might be noted that he himself afterwards became the author of a school reader (Appleton's Fifth) built upon these lines, and, with the possible exception of McGuffey's old Sixth Reader, the best epitome of literature. It seemed incredible to Dr. Harris that educators should neglect "the sacred treasures embalmed in literature." Such instruction he held with Goethe (quoting him), "like baked bread, savory and satisfying for a single day, but flour cannot be sown and seed-corn ought not to be ground." Says Dr. Harris, "next to religion in a national culture is the influence of literature."

Grammar. He then turned his attention to grammar, where he found the preponderance of time devoted to parsing and the correcting of false syntax to the necessary neglect, for want of time, of analysis, whose claims as a study for mental discipline, he advocated strongly, ranking it far above the abstract reasoning of arithmetic and placing it by

the side of formal logic as a discipline. He assaulted the defective definitions, specifically of mood, and thus loosened still further the moorings of the opinionated.

He paid a high tribute to the author of "Hermes", "profound Aristotelian as he was, living before grammar had been tampered with by school-book makers, the only writer on the subject that really digested it." He longed for "the coming grammarian, unhaunted by some classic 'dead' language, who shall give us a grammar of our most modern and analytic of languages." He said in conclusion, "can we not secure in the future both of these good things, the correct use of our language, together with the logical acumen that pierces to the scientific basis of the same?"

Penmanship. To improve penmanship, he advocated, and in 1868, secured the services of a special teacher, or supervisor, of penmanship, in the person of Mr. Harvey A. Spencer, son of the founder of the Spencerian System, under whose direction the work in this branch improved amazingly in form, freedom and uniformity.

Arithmetic. Is arithmetic the best branch for the discipline of the reasoning faculty?, was a question which he answered in the negative, with telling force, arraying in support of his view Sir Wm. Hamilton and an unbroken line of thinkers from Plato down, at the same time conceding readily the great value of this study as a utility. With all his gifts, and he was truly many sided intellectually, dialetics, or ratiocination, was certainly his most congenial and probably most effective, attainment. His greatest force lay in his power of subsuming the standpoint of his opponent and in making the negative negate itself, (as the saying is). The definition, "Quantity is anything that may be increased, diminished or measured", he attacked and declared it equivalent to saying "quantity is anything whose quantity may

be changed or compared with other quantities"; furthermore he denied that quantity is a *thing* at all, it being rather a property, or determination. "In Arithmetic we neglect intensive quantity, which has degree, is a specifying element and modifies quantity". "What is the habit of thought worth which is trained to neglect the quality, i. e., the essential nature of objects?" "Mathematical reasoning is of too abstract and mechanical a nature to be of much service as a mental discipline when we compare it with grammatical analysis".

Little dreaming then that he himself was yet to become the Editor-in-Chief of Webster's New International Dictionary, he alludes to the fact that "Noah Webster saw the defect of this definition of quantity but did not attempt to remedy it."

History and the Constitution of the U. S. One year, the eighth only, was allotted by him to the study of history and constitution of the United States, the former ending with the adoption of the constitution, and this chiefly because our history subsequent to this period "had not become classic and could not but be written from a partisan standpoint". He lived to see this notion overwhelmingly abandoned by present day school historians, despite this view, whether right or wrong.

Geography. He did not undervalue the study of mathematical and physical, but insisted upon their being subordinated to political geography. This warning came at a time when Von Humboldt, Agassiz, Guyot and Ritter were at the zenith of their influence.

He forcefully called attention to the fact that political geography sets out with the question, "What relation has the earth to man?" He contrasted the isolated condition of Robinson Crusoe with man in society. He says, "Only by combination in the form of society can man realize his

rational well-being." Here was struck the fundamental chord of what became, ever after, the predominant theme of all the subsequent pedagogical reflections of this truly great man. He held that in his course from savagery up to civilization, man eventually reaches ownership of real estate, rights of property, money, the universal solvent of values, commerce, not of material things alone, but of spiritual products, arts, institutions, ideas, the interchange of manners and customs as well as of the commodities of industry. "The problem is to find what is the relation of each place to the rest of the world."

He felt that we should give, as far as in our power, "such education to the rising generation as will fit it for political insight and wise statesmanship." He considered this department of geography, involving the elements of political economy, to be "the corner-stone of such education".

Singing. He considered this "the only branch whose entire direct effect was upon the moral disposition of the pupil". He said, "Proper songs soften the manners and arouse the finer feelings of the pupil; music is the door to ethical principles and the germs of religion", and instanced the effect of selections from Bach, Haydn, Gluck, Mozart and Beethoven in cultivating the religious sentiment, freed from sectarianism. He quoted the insights of Socrates from Plato's Republic as to the moral rhythm and harmony of soul engendered by music. He instanced the Pedagogical Province in Goethe's Wilhelm Meister, as enforcing kindred ideas for the modern consciousness. He felt that music had a special influence on the capacity for receiving instruction, and, in this connection, he instanced the German nation, distinguished for this internality (innerlichkeit) which finds expression in music, the root of clear insight. He quoted "Let me make the songs of a people, and I care not who makes their laws". He once declared, in conversation,

that the late Professor Henry Robyn, with his Classical Singer, "had lifted music out of the gutters in St. Louis".

The following is a list of the composers, selections from whom were studied by the classes in the Normal, High and Branch High Schools during this period: Haydn, Mendelssohn, Mozart, Beethoven, Wagner, Kreuzer, von Weber, Rossini, Meyerbeer, Kuecken and Abt.

Spelling. In spelling he prepared for the higher grades a "selected list" of twelve hundred words which proved a pronounced success, and, by trial upon words not in the list, fully confirmed his view, that "the faculty of remembering form is not confined to the particular list of words memorized".

Reviews. He considered the correct theory of reviews the most important subject in the art of teaching, since the digesting of what is learned is of far higher value than its mere acquisition; not the going over of the previous lesson, but the holding of all essentials in unity by the teacher, so that the last lesson might be seen as an epitome of the entire study. "Not the mere finding of isolated facts but the tracing of relationships and organizing the same so that the pupil in the end may see and comprehend the whole." His views here expressed embody all but the name of "Apperception" and show him, at this early date, fully equipped for the great service he years afterwards rendered the cause of education through his debates with the Herbartians upon the floor of the National Educational Association while recognizing the validity of their apperception within its proper sphere.

He pointed out the dangers of teachers becoming too analytical, that, in any subject, "there is a point of maximum clearness, which should be the starting point and place of return, to analyze beyond this is to go into the region of difficulties". As an example of this he instanced the teach-

ing of decimals, the decimal point, or unit's place, being the natural starting point, which must constantly be referred back to, if confusion would be prevented.

Grube Method. In furtherance of this comprehensive grasp of relationships, in the year 1871, by his sanction and under the able guidance of Assistant Superintendent F. Louis Soldan, the Grube Method of teaching Primary Arithmetic was introduced. The essence of this method was the teaching of the four fundamental processes simultaneously; it was successful and has remained the source and inspiration of elementary arithmetic work in our schools up to the present time. It is worthy of note here that, as an undergraduate at Yale, where he remained until toward the close of his junior year, Dr. Harris especially excelled in mathematics, to which fact he sometimes referred with seeming pride in later years.

He finally called attention to the fact that history and geography are the subjects wherein the true method of reviewing is apt to be neglected.

Natural Science. In 1871, recognizing the popular pressure for more "practical" (so called) studies, Dr. Harris prepared his now famous scheme of Lessons in Natural Science, and so arranged them as not to compromise the thoroughness of the regular instruction in his beloved "conventional rudiments", which he ever managed to shield at all hazards.

This course embraced the entire field of science; plants, animals, physical elements, and mechanical powers. It was arranged in cycles and was to be traversed thrice in its entirety during the then seven years' course; through the first three years, generally, for arousing the attention chiefly, and for utilizing the little ones' playthings; again, through the next two years, more deeply, with the special object of reenforcing the study of physical geography, then

a part of the elementary curriculum; again through the last two years, more technically, with a view to connecting with the science work of the High School.

It was a surprise to those unfamiliar with Dr. Harris' early life to witness the comprehensive ease with which he entered this new field, so foreign to his previous labors among us. But, in fact, his native bent was very close to nature and science. Blessed with a splendid physique, he excelled in physical deeds. He was an expert and enduring swimmer; in the hay-field his swath was more than a foot wider than those of his fellow mowers. His was the first school gymnasium in St. Louis, and in it he was the chief performer. He was a dead shot and ingenious in mechanical devices. He always had his kit of tools and was noted for his ability to take a clock to pieces and make it go when other artificers had failed. He cobbled his own shoes when at school. He made himself a telescope of excellent power. He carried his pocket barometer with him to estimate heights. And, as a child, the father to the man, he was wont to cover the kitchen stove with his mechanical devices, utilizing, like Watt, the tea-kettle for motive power, until many a time his good mother would say, "Come, William, take your traps off the stove, I must get dinner."

Text Books. In order to stem the rising tide which had then set in towards oral instruction, especially in the primary grades, Dr. Harris was at the very beginning of his duties as Superintendent obliged to use his dialetics in behalf of textbooks as the proper medium in American schools.

He prefaced his masterly argument with the general statement that "Our American idea rests on this principle: **Not what the teacher does for the pupil, but what he gets the pupil to do for himself, is of value.**" From this he traced the great importance of text-books in our system of education; "since they are the best instruments for engendering self-help in the pupil whose destiny is intelligent par-

ticipation in self-government. Here, where personal influence must be a vanishing element, the wise teacher, with this end in view, will only help the child to help himself, and the text-book necessarily enables him to most effectively sink self in the service of the pupil."

"In Europe where the ruling class digests everything for the pupil, deals out religion and the system of education as well as the laws and usages to the masses below," oral instruction or the lecture system may be all very well, but in America, the land of self-government, this method is and must be reversed.

In America the pupil must master, as speedily as possible, the printed book. When he knows how to use his text-book, "he has opened the door to the mastery of all books." "It is our policy rather to develop ability than to give exhaustive information. The printed page is the mighty Aladdin's lamp which gives to the meanest citizen the power to lay a spell on time and space."

"A dim recognition of this has all along existed among our educational men, but after all it is our political instinct that has saved us. Every step towards the mastery of the printed page is a step towards freedom from and independence of living teachers. Thus our education is a giving of the conventionalities of a perpetual self-education."

Dr. Harris compares oral instruction to the loading of an emigrant train with ready made products, and text-book education to the shipment rather of the machinery, appliances and tools by which these products may be won from the wilderness by the pioneer himself.

He held that the branches comprising our elementary course of study are the best possible for ushering the pupil into the world of intelligence, wherein his community has its spiritual life, and fit him best for communication with the world. "No studies could be substituted for them for all other branches presuppose them."

His timely advice to the teacher as to the method of enabling the pupil "to distill the inmost essences of his book and to live in the creative intelligence of its author," embodies all the essentials of the so-called "study-recitation" of to-day.

After the pupil has completed these studies, he is ready to extend his researches indefinitely.

The foregoing leads logically to the consideration of the Public (School) Library whose creative idea, born in the brain of the late Ira Divoll, was to supplement and extend indefinitely the work of the schools. "Founded"', to quote the exact words of Dr. Harris, "through the indefatigable industry of my predecessor, Mr. Divoll, its growth and usefulness commemorate his career and do honor to his name." From that day, in the year 1866, when its founder took under his arm a bundle of books and planted them on the shelf in the little room at Broadway and Olive Street, saying as he did so, "this is the beginning," this institution grew rapidly and well, under the fostering care of Dr. Harris, who ever remained its best friend and strongest advocate, and whose greatest contribution to its usefulness was the classified catalogue which he prepared when its volumes had reached about twenty-four thousand in number. It was a remarkabe digest and organization of all literature, which proved of incaculable usefulness to the reader in search of what the library contained for him, according to the testimony of its first librarian, the late John J. Bailey. This in connection with an alphabetical index, prepared at the same time by Dr. Harris, was rendered even more practicable by the introduction of a card catalogue, suggested by that at the University of Leyden. The continued usefulness of such a classified catalogue will depend, of course, upon the ability or inclination of the librarian to digest and properly classify additions as they are received from time to time.

Object Teaching Versus Discipline Study. To account for his elaboration of topics not usually found in school reports, Dr. Harris says, "I have solely in view the settlement of certain educational questions that are continually pressing for solution in one shape or another, and have to be solved. Without casting a glance at the landmarks now and then, one cannot expect to do otherwise than drift from side to side wherever the winds and currents impel him." About the year 1868 one of these urgent questions arose, the schools being menaced with a disproportionate inundation of Pestalozzian object-teaching with its appeals to the senses alone, at the expense of the higher spiritual elements of the mind, and so Dr. Harris was again called upon to use his favorite dialectics, and he did it so effectively as to settle, if not for all time, at least for a generation, the question of object teaching versus discipline study.

He began by quoting Carlyle, "Man is a tool-using animal". He held that school education should be the giving to the pupil skill "to handle the tools of thought"; given these, "man will immediately invent the tools of art and forthwith conquer nature."

He noted the prevalence of two educational ideas; the one for "Facts", quoting Mr. Gradgrind; the other for discipline with stress upon attention. "But that discipline which comes from attention to Egyptian hieroglyphics, the habits of turtles and beetles, or etymological trash, from the lumber room of antiquity," causes re-action from the opposite side, who cry out, "we want immediate objects", "let us know what is", "give us things, not words." "How plausible all this," says Dr. Harris, "and how legitimate too in its own narrow sphere, but how subversive of all education when it is made the whole scope." For we can see, hear and feel only immediate objects. "No object that possesses universality can be thus seized; so we lose the ultimate results of science. Can we present to the senses a single necessary truth? Can God, Freedom and Immortality be

thus cognized? The mind must arise out of the senses and the external. The inward light alone can make the Eternal Verities visible."

Pestalozzi in his day saw all Europe "done to death with formalism" and strutting about in the worn-out costumes of empty pretension just before the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars. Rousseau cried "back to nature." Chateaubriand painted the blessed natural life of the American Indian, Pestalozzi would reform Pedagogy on this plan; "Let us teach real objects," said he, "and eschew names, taking for granted that the immediately perceived existence *is* the True," "But," says Dr. Harris, "if the abiding be the true, then the *name* "horse" has outlived a thousand generations of individuals; for the individual dies, and only the genus or species, to which alone we give names, survives. So in the end Pestalozzi found himself driven to teach names, and plenty of them, so that we had to have *books* to put his long lists of names in, and, if he would ever get to the end, he must needs select only certain objects for study and ignore the rest; but *which* objects? To answer this question demanded a system of philosophy, which he had not. So he finds himself back where he began with *names* and *books*. He began with the intention to elevate the natural over the spiritual; to dissolve the subject into the object rather than the contrary. He virtually inverted his theory and thus builded wiser than he knew."

Dr. Harris does not fail to give full credit to the Pestalozzians within their legitimate sphere of sense-perception and to recognize its application at times when, through habit, learning has become dead, as a "waking up" system to arouse fresh enthusiasm. In conclusion he quotes Superintendent J. L. Pickard, then of the Chicago Schools, who, in a Report to the National Teachers Association in 1865, said of Object-teaching, "carefully used, it will awaken to new thought and will encourage to the mastery of difficult-

ies suggested or rather thrown in the way of pupils. But only master minds can use it."

According to Dr. Harris, "neither the formal discipline method, indifferent to the objects taken up in the course of study, nor the object-method, commonly assuming the sensuous origin of all knowledge, can be regarded as complete for the true system. The 'what' one studies is as important as 'how' he studies it."

Thus the true method of pedagogy should be that which holds firmly to the course of study and takes up in order the "conventionalities of intelligence." The acquirement of myriads of facts is a poor substitute for the culture derived by devoting the same time to the fundamental studies in their regular sequence.

"All the school time of the pupil should be devoted to the mastering of the general course of study rather than to Special Arts." "The position I take is that public education should confine itself to the indispensables, like reading, writing and arithmetic and, after this, to general principles applicable in all spheres of life, and that industrial education should not pursue any other course."

In this connection as early as 1870 Dr. Harris called attention to the activity in Europe in founding industrial schools, contrasting the same with our public schools, which are "the legitimate type of the school as a republican institution." "It is our democratic idea that *all* shall be educated for the highest possibilities."

It is true that productive industry is the instrument of democracy, and labor-saving machinery lifts human hands from drudgery to freedom; but, if the ruling classes of society think to retain power by furnishing to the people only education of the industrial kind, they are certainly mistaken, for man will not submit to be a mere machine or instrument. He aspires to be self-governed, he will take the long step from manual labor to directive power. "He will

stop at nothing short of the spiritual culture that makes it alike directive and governing in the sphere of mind, the realm of social, moral and mental existence."

"If the monarchies of Europe think to put off the people with mere polytechnic and industrial education, they will find that they have fostered a directive power that will grope for, and find the helm of state, and then attempt to direct the administration of government. The mistake will then become visible. For the people must have universal education fitting them for the highest as well as the lowest. Human instruments will not stay contented as instruments; they aspire to transcend their hard limits and blind aspiration, from which enlightenment is shut out, leads to July revolutions and reigns of terror."

"The snobbery that patronizingly talks of the education of the 'lower classes', does not know that the industrial education it affects to admire is an instrument that only Democracy can wield, and to leave out the *humanities* from that education is to leave out the culture that can guide its course, and communism and socialism and abstract theories will find their way quickly into the heads of the laboring classes. No merely prescriptive education of either church or school can prevent the people's mind from being infected with crazy political and social theories, destructive of all sound growth. A broad human culture is the only safe preventive".

"Not merely natural philosophy, chemistry, mathematics and biology must be studied, but the science of society, state, art, religion, philosophy, in all their phases. The great educators of the race, Homer, Dante, Shakespeare and Goethe, Plato, Aristotle, Leibnitz and Newton, these must be made accessible to the people. Each child must be waited on by the institutions of man and invited to see the spectacle of human civilization. His human brothers that have added a cubit to the world's stature by their heroic labors must be pointed out to him, their methods and

achievements, their noblest aspiration and earnest, self-sacrificing endeavor must be imparted to him as the means of achieving his individual destiny."

Classics. An epochal event in the history of Education was when Dr. Harris came to the rescue of the humanities in his remarkable defense of the study of the classics at a time when this study was being flippantly assailed by so-called "prominent educators" and receiving "but feeble defense from even its installed 'professors' who would seem called upon to defend their province by showing its rationality."

Ignoring the familiar stock arguments of discipline, culture, accuracy of thought or expression, and subordinating even that of the classics furnishing the vocabulary of thought and reflection, giving grasp of mind as regards generalizations and principles, he sweeps us at once into a far deeper view and says, "It is when we come to look the question earnestly in the face as applied to all European culture that we begin to see its truer and deeper psychological bearing."

The regeneration of the individual lies in his "presuppositions", which, when comprehended, lift him out of his particular form of being into the generic, universal form thereof—this is the course of culture.

"Thus for ages the mind of our youth has been trained in the schools on the two dead languages, Latin and Greek. For the evolution of the civilization in which we live and move and have our being, issued through Greece and Rome on its way to us." "In our civil and political forms we live Roman life to-day; our scientific and aesthetic forms come from beyond Rome, they speak the language of their Greek home to this very day, just as much as jurisprudence and legislation pronounce their edicts in Roman words." These are our "presuppositions", and must be known, if we would know our truer, higher selves. This the mere study

of history or literature in translations will not give; it must be by learning the language of these people, "The clothing of their inmost spiritual selves". "We must master our history in order to know ourselves," and our history lies through Greece and Rome.

Nor will it do to substitute for them some modern language, German or French, these are our contemporaries, and such a course "would be", in the exact words of Dr. Harris, "paralleled in the science of zoology by suggesting a study of snakes instead of tadpoles in the embryology of the frog."

The High School. When we observe on all sides to-day the readiness with which the High Schools are accepted as an integral part and crown of our public school system, it is hard to believe that but a generation ago their very existence was threatened by an unenlightened popular wave which called them exclusive, undemocratic and unjustified at public expense. To stem this tide Dr. Harris again entered the arena in defense of the free public High Schools. His main argument was based upon the changed social conditions, brought about by improved and multiplied means of quick communication (the railroad, telegraph. etc.), making rural life practically urban, and labor-saving machinery diversifying industries and vastly increasing the demand for *directive power*. This directive power could best be supplied by the High School, which, in time, as this new reason for its existence came to be generally understood and accepted, was proudly called the "people's college".

In 1871 four branch High Schools were established to relieve the pressure of numbers upon the one Central High School and incidentally to accommodate pupils nearer their homes, to facilitate grading by the consolidation of the eighth grade pupils in their respective districts, into Branch High Preparatories, thus enabling District Schools to promote up into their highest rooms and to provide for their

primary children in the vicinity of their homes. These Branches where under the immediate supervision of the Principal of the Central High School. The plan was admirable, the schools excellent, and many pupils, owing to its nearness and convenience to them, entered upon a High School course, who otherwise might never have known of its benefits. In the light of the present, their discontinuance, for no good reason, savors of the tragic and must have been a grievous disappointment to Dr. Harris, who had designed and fostered them. When discontinued they were about ripe for taking on the second High School year, and, whatever may have been the ultimate intention of their founder, they bade fair to grow into a full four years' course, so that, a generation ago, we should have had five High Schools properly located, instead of one.

Kindergarten. A supreme moment in the history of American education was that when Dr. Wm. T. Harris and Miss Susan E. Blow first met to consider this momentous question, fraught with so much of weal for education in the United States. She came with her splendid enthusiasm and native intelligence, tact and skill, fresh from the study of the Kindergarten in its purest form, he recognizing in that the most perfect embodiment of his profound pedagogical philosophizing, and she recognizing in this the organic soul of her methods. Then and there, theory and practice, perfect form and perfect system, joined in the great work of our most potent of modern educational reforms.

The Kindergarten, introduced in 1873, soon passed the experimental stage, grew steadily in public estimation as its merits became more widely known, and long since has taken such hold upon the citizens of St. Louis, that they no longer need to be urged to have it. They now demand it with an urgency that is irresistible. Now, whenever a new school building is planned, the architect includes in

his specifications provision for a kindergarten, which has at length, become in all respects, an integral part of our school system. Thus has been established the true transition, from the home to the printed page over the beautiful bridge of symbolism.

Its "gifts" and "occupations" were the acknowledged inspiration of manual training, and its influence throughout all the grades has been wholesome and uplifting

In his last School Report (1878-9) Dr. Harris gave greatest prominence to the claims of the Kindergarten for a place in the public school system, emphasizing its influence upon industrial education. In this elaborate and comprehensive exposition of the aims and methods of Froebel, he incidentally mentions with apparently great interest the habit of the little ones in carrying and arranging their chairs and tables on and off the "circle" from time to time. This interest Miss Blow once noticed, and jocosely called this employment of the children, "Dr. Harris' occupation," suggesting that it be added to Froebel's list. Now that the good man has gone from us forever, might not this activity of the children stand as his perpetual memorial, reminding the child and the kindergartner of one who contributed, in life, so much of sympathetic support to their well-being?

THE PUBLIC SCHOOL AS A SOCIAL INSTITUTION.

Those splendidly vital years from 1867, when Dr. Harris became superintendent, to 1880 when, having finished his work with us, he left St. Louis shortly after to assume general supervision of the Schools of the Republic at large as National Commissioner of Education, may well be considered our American pedagogical *renascence,* for during that period, his universal insight and foresight recreated and breathed fresh soul into every department of public education, giving fundamental reasons for the existence of each and greatly helping the American schoolmaster to become

clearly conscious of his work. The age of impulse in American pedagogy passed away and that of rational conviction succeeded, until today it is easy to see his mighty influence manifesting itself in the remarkable unity of ends in the educational systems of the several States of our Union as well as in uniformity of methods.

Supervision. As part of the school organization instituted by Dr. Harris, there was established an Examining Committee and Advisory Board, composed of the Superintendent, his assistants, and the Principals of the Normal, High and Branch High Schools, whose duty it was to examine all applicants for teachers' positions and, to act in an advisory capacity, when invited so to do, by the Superintendent, or any Committee of the Board of Public Schools.

The plan of local supervision was also at this time introduced, whereby Principals of first-class District Schools were given one or more additional schools to supervise, making regular reports to the Superintendent as to their condition.

In the words of Dr. Harris, "The system of Supervising Principalships has done more to equalize and elevate instruction and discipline in our schools than all other things combined." This he puts as the fifth link in the Chain of Organization of our American Schools, reaching from the National Commissioner of Education, down through State, County and City. He says "Through thorough organization alone can scattered fragments be united into a system."

Prescription Versus Spontaneity as Applied to Discipline.

There was no one of his many services to our American educational weal, which, in far reaching importance, can stand in preference to his lucid, profound and comprehensive treatment of this vital question.

He says himself, "This problem of prescription is the profoundest and most important one in education and without its solution we continually drift in the eddies of fruitless experiment and waste the energies and possibilities of the rising generation."

In our country is going on continually a new synthesis of nationalities, by which, in their collision with one another, idiosyncrasies are worn away and a new cosmopolitan national type becomes visible. We soon see that differences of customs and usages are superficial and subordinate to our common humanity beneath the surface. "We thus adopt toleration as our principle and insist upon the right of private judgment. But toleration and license are very different things." We come to make a distinction between thought and action. "A man's thought is his own, his deed belongs to all" and is guided by the forms of justice and right embodied in the institutions that environ him. Here we have toleration and prescription side by side. "Prescription comes from realized reason in the forms of Family, Society, State, Religion. On the other hand, self-activity or spontaneity, freedom of thought, the realization of directive intelligence, shall prevail more and more and at last become universal". "This is our deepest national conviction, and should we lose faith in it, we would become the saddest and weariest of people."

Pedagogy has for its province the mediation of these two sides and must solve their contradiction. The school is the theatre on which the transition takes place from obedience to external authority into free action from personal conviction.

Unlike the Oriental or even European entering school from under severely rigid and inflexible prescription, the American child "coming from almost loose social and family prescription, must be held at first with a firm grasp until prescription appeals to his conviction of the justice and

rectitude of the rules and regulations that bind him. Severe prescription must be supplanted by that which is more rational. As the whipping post has well nigh passed away in the state, so corporal punishment must yield to suspension and milder methods in the school."

When the child gives willing assent to prescription because he is convinced that it is just and right, he becomes free in the same sense as the adult "who yields willing obedience to the rational will of his institutional world, of whose necessity he is so convinced, that, if it ceased to exist, he would devote his life to recreating it."

Co-Education of the Sexes. Incidental to the foregoing Dr. Harris next gives attention to the then growing and urgent question of co-education of the sexes.

Up to 1858 in our grammar schools the sexes were entirely separated. In that year the Franklin Grammar School was opened as a "mixed" school, others gradually followed until all but the Eliot School were similarly organized. The experiment proved a permanent success, and Dr. Harris, after a careful and close study of the new situation, summarized its advantages in the following reasons, which still retain their potency:—1. Economy has been secured by larger numbers to facilitate classification and grading. 2. Discipline has improved continually owing to the wholesome natural influence of the sexes, thus associated. 3. Instruction has also greatly improved by the blending of the so-called masculine and feminine methods of instruction, the girls making wonderful advances in mathematical studies, and the boys taking a much deeper interest in literature. 4. Individual development has proved far more sound and healthy, demanding less strict surveillance on the part of the teacher than in separate schools.

"Our experience in St. Louis", says Dr. Harris, "has been entirely in favor of co-education of the sexes in all the respects mentioned and in many other minor ones."

Healthfulness of Study. As a kindred topic and, in reply to the "hue and cry" against the supposed injurious effect of study upon the bodily health, he treated, in his accustomed thorough-going way, the then pressing question of healthfulness of study. He showed that "most of the arguments adduced to prove the unhealthfulness of study are purely chimerical." He instanced what statistics show, the greater power of the city volunteers in the late Civil War, who had been most developed nervously, to withstand the fatigues of the campaign; that the average life of the college graduate was almost twenty per cent greater than that of the rest of the community in which he lived, the same being true in favor of the professions which demand a life of hard study. He said, "Mental discipline constantly increases the power of the will over the body and it has been remarked that men possessed with great purposes have a surprising power to ward off disease and death until the achievement of their plans. It is as normal for a man to exercise his brain as for animals to exercise their limbs."

Schools Should be Democratic. He favored the highest attainable education for all—even for the humblest—this the spirit of American institutions demands.

"Our schools", he said, "should be Democratic, good enough for the best and cheap enough for the poorest." Since people must come in contact in actual life, in what place can they be better prepared for this than in the school, where each meets the other on an intellectual basis and under the wholesome influence of strict discipline? Here each will learn to recognize the substantial (i. e., the spiritual) strength of the other and to ignore the petty accidents of wealth and position." "Poverty is not a crime and must not be treated like vagrancy and imbecility." He grew impatient with attempts to put off any portion of our children with the premature learning of a trade or vocation

at the expense of the general culture that should precede or accompany them; he considered this drift as un-American, as tending to *caste*. For this reason he evn personally opposed "elective studies" in our high school, and felt that the "classical course" would be best even for those who meant to go no further than through that school.

Will-training leads to directive power and he felt that directive power unenlightened by broad culture would lead to unintelligent control and dangerous social theories, fraught with disaster to the public weal.

Moral Education. In the early seventies the schools were attacked from two quarters; the one (apparently believing our public school education to be solely intellectual) opposing mere intellectual education, since it tended to refine and render more ingenious the rascality of the evil-disposed; the other, assuming that religion is the inseparable basis of morality; and therefore, since the schools provide for no religious instruction, they must necessarily be "godless" and immoral. Dr. Harris was again called to the defense of the schools and right nobly and effectively did he do his work.

He says, "the time demands a complete elucidation of the problem of moral education at the hands of those who direct the system of Public Schools." His ancestor, Thomas Harris, had come to the founding of Rhode Island with Roger Williams, whose principle of action was, "the civil power has no control over the religious opinions of men." It seems therefore in harmony with the eternal fitness of things that Dr. Harris should become the one whose duty it was to defend the separation of Church and State as applied to public instruction.

He says "with the advent of Christianity, proclaiming a spiritual kingdom to be found in the depths of inward reflection and devotion, thus separating itself from the external and merely secular, a new institution arises in the world, the Church as a distinct existence."

"What breaks the laws of Right is called **crime**; what breaks the mandate of religion is called **sin**." In this distinction lies the ground of separation of Church and State in modern times. This grows out of the impossibility of reconciling the two standards of estimating retribution—the State demands that the doer get the fruit of his deed, and thus preserve his responsibility and self-determination; the Church would meet infinite forfeiture with infinite mercy upon repentance. To remit all punishment on the ground of infinite mercy would destroy the ethical world at once. "To punish **crime** as a **sin** destroys practical life, and to treat sin as a mere **crime** degrades religion from the holy to the profane."

On the same ground that Church and State have become independent, why may not the School and the Church sunder to mutual advantage?"

He further says, "I wish to be explicitly understood as claiming only that Public School education is moral, and completely so, on its own basis; that it lays the basis for religion, but is not a substitute for religion."

After calling attention to the ethical institutions, the Family, Society and State, with their respective disciplines and the necessity of our conformity with these through culture and insight, he addresses himself to the subject of:

School Discipline as Adapted to Secure Moral Education. The Public School pillars are Behavior and Scholarship. Order is the first law, and, in the schools, the following virtues are persistently insisted upon:—1. Punctuality. 2. Regularity—(Punctuality reduced to a system)—these two are the alphabet of the moral code (as machinery helps to conformity with these virtues in the ethical world, so do calisthenics with its uniformity of movement and vocal music with its harmony and rhythm in our schools). 3. Silence (absorption, self-control). 4. Truth (the basis of duties of the individual toward others). 5. Justice (and

without hope of reward, which is baneful). 6. Kindness (or love of mankind); "this, like Justice, requires community for its culture; it is the universal that reaches down into the particular, and would help it up to itself. Kindness is the moral duty that approaches nearest to Religion and forms the connecting link with it." He further says, in substance, statistics, relative to the effect of education on crime, disclose that the bulk of criminality goes hand in hand with illiteracy, orphanage (lack of family care) or intemperance, only 1 in 75, or 1-⅓ per cent, of the criminals being of those who have had "a complete public school education."

As his last will and testament upon the subject, Dr. Harris left the teachers of St. Louis two pages on "Educational Psychology", the same being a notable conspectus of the essentials of Hegel's Logic, his well-known philosophic Bible, indicating in their order, the psychological steps to be taken by the teachers in the rational unfoldment of any branch of study. This remarkable epitome contains the seed-thoughts of his "Psychological Foundations."

In concluding his last report he says, "next May (1880) will complete my twelfth year in the office of Superintendent of the St. Louis Schools.

It is my intention to close my career (here) at that time. As this is my last annual report of these schools, therefore, I take occasion to bear testimony to the uniform spirit of co-operation which the Board has manifested towards me, and to here publicly express my gratitude to the Board for the generous manner in which it has ever supported my endeavors to serve the best interests of the schools."

On the eve of his departure (May 12, 1880), Dr. Harris became the recipient of a set of heartfelt **Resolutions**, beautifully bound, and personally signed by the entire corps of teachers by schools, the last of these reading as follows, **Resolved**, "that in taking leave of the Public Schools of St. Louis, Dr. Harris carries with him the respect and esteem

of his former associates, their deep interest in his future career and best wishes for his safe return to Home and Native Land."

Thus this great man passed quietly and unobtrusively from our midst, leaving behind him the growing consciousness that during all those vital years of his sojourn with us, we had really been entertaining an "Angel unawares." Such are the ways of Providence.

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